

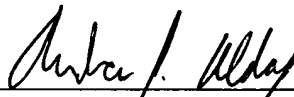
**Preliminary Amendment**  
**U.S. Patent Application No. 10/544,248**

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-28 are presently pending. Claims 1-23 have been amended to clarify certain claim language, while new claims 24-28 have been added. Support for the amended and new claims can be found throughout the specification.

Applicants submit that the application is in condition for examination, and favorable examination is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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